

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: Introduction

Workforce System Results
December 31, 2005

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is pleased to present a series of performance highlights from the public workforce system as of December 31, 2005. This series is offered to provide a snapshot of the results of ETA programs and their progress in achieving their goals to help people find jobs and connect employers to workers. We hope that these highlights serve as a starting point for further inquiry and analysis of program performance.

Our ETA mission is to contribute to the more efficient functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high quality job training, employment, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through state and local workforce development systems.

For further information about this series of highlights or other performance reviews, contact ETA's Office of Performance and Technology, (202) 693-3031.

U.S. National Employment Indicators		
	31-Dec-05	31-Dec-04
Total Labor Force	150,153,000	148,173,000
Employed	142,779,000	140,133,000
Unemployed Number	7,375,000	8,040,000
Unemployed Rate	4.9%	5.4%
New Initial Claims for Unemployment Insurance (UI)	1,167,660	1,286,873
Number of First UI Payments	713,393	784,052
Average Weeks Receiving UI in Calendar Years 2005 and 2004	15.4	16.2

Labor Market Trends: Changes in the Retail Industry*

Employment in the United States has been affected by shifts in the retail industry. Accounting for about one in eight private payroll jobs, this sector has a major impact on the economy. The growth of supercenter stores has been a major influence in the retail industry. Traditional department stores shed about 170,000 jobs from March 2001 to June 2003, while discount stores added 21,000 jobs. Supercenters, on the other hand, added 164,000 jobs in the same period. Between 1997 and 2002, the number of supermarkets and grocery stores declined by 3,369, and 738 department stores closed. However, supercenters experienced an increase of 1,385 outlets in the same interval, and saw their percentage of retail sales almost double from 3.3 percent to 6.2 percent. Supercenters have moved into areas of retail trade dominated by other types of stores, so they can be expected to have similar effects on employment in those sectors as well.

*As reported in "From supermarkets to supercenters: employment shifts to the one-stop shop", *Monthly Labor Review*, February 2006.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Program Highlights, Appropriations and Expenditures